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**African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)**

Mogadishu, Somalia

Email: [au-amisomhom@africa-union.org](mailto:au-amisomhom@africa-union.org)

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**AMISOM TAKES NOTE OF ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ITS TROOPS IN MARKA AND REMAINS COMMITTED TO ADDRESSING THESE CHARGES**

**Mogadishu, 4 August 2015** - The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has noted with serious concern allegations relating to civilian deaths, made against its troops in Marka, Lower Shabelle Region.

In the past two weeks, AMISOM has intensified operations in Lower Shabelle as part of the general offensive being conducted across South Central Somalia. During the same period, our troops supply convoys have come under recurrent attacks by Al Shabaab. During these, in self defence, troops have proportionately responded to such attacks. Nevertheless AMISOM regards any loss of innocent lives as tragic and we take all reports of such incidents seriously.

Following this recurring situation, AMISOM held a meeting with community elders during which measures to enhance security in the area and the need to foster better relations were discussed. There was a request from some elders for troops to be withdrawn from a particular deployment which provides a critical link and access between Marka and Mogadishu. The request was considered carefully, but denied given the security implications both for Marka and Mogadishu.

There have been a number of calls for investigation into the alleged killing of civilians in Marka, which the leadership of AMISOM has noted and respects. Considering our commitment to upholding our human rights obligations in the conduct of our operations, in response to the rash of allegations coming out of Marka, and in line with laid down administrative procedures, the officer in charge of the troop detachment in Marka has been recalled for questioning as a prelude to a possible further investigation.

Meanwhile, AMISOM would like to reiterate our appeal to all Somalis to continue to support AMISOM and the Somali authorities as well as the security institutions by exposing those Al Shabaab elements that are now disguised as civilians in their communities so that they do not succeed in perpetrating harm against the population. On our part, AMISOM will continue to take precautions to prevent civilian casualties in the conduct of our operations against the Al Shabaab.

AMISOM will work closely with the Federal Government and the Interim South West Administration in resolving the Marka security issues.

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*For more information, please contact; Eloi Yao and Lt Col Paul Njuguna, AMISOM Spokespersons,  
Cell phone: (Somalia) +252 618 508 181 / +252 699 563 476 / +252 617 682 175;  
(Nairobi) +254 702 155 126 / +254 728 701 222;  
Email: [amisommediacentre@gmail.com](mailto:amisommediacentre@gmail.com)*

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# AMISOM Takes Note of Allegations against Its Troops in MARKA and Remains Committed To Addressing These Charges

Peace and Security

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